



NEWSLETTER 6 – 6th December 2024

‘Let your light shine’

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Dear Derry Hill School Community,

As we approach the festive season, I am delighted to reflect on recent events that have enriched our school life. The annual Christmas Fayre proved yet again to be a resounding success, bringing together past and present pupils, families, and staff in a celebration of community spirit. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Friends of Derry Hill School, our dedicated staff, and all the families who contributed through their generous donations and enthusiastic participation.

It has been particularly encouraging to witness the engagement of our families during our Open Classrooms and Family Learning afternoons. These occasions provide invaluable opportunities for our pupils to showcase their academic progress and creative endeavours, fostering a sense of pride and accomplishment that is fundamental to their educational journey and to allow you as parents the opportunity to feel involved in your child's learning.

As we look ahead to the festive period, we eagerly anticipate our upcoming Nativity shows and Key Stage 2 Carol Service. These events not only showcase the talents of our pupils but also serve to bring our community together in celebration. Additionally, our annual pantomime trip promises to be a delightful culmination of the term's activities.

In closing, I would like to express my profound appreciation for the continued support and engagement of our school community. Your involvement is integral to the success and vibrancy of Derry Hill School.

Hayley Roberts
Headteacher



Diary Dates

Monday 9th December - Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Tuesday 10th December - Nativity Performance for Parents 9.15am (Hall)
Wednesday 11th December - Nativity Performance for Parents 2pm (Hall)
Thursday 12th December - Whole School Pantomime Trip (Cinderella)
Tuesday 17th December - Christmas Jumper & Dinner Day
Wednesday 18th December - KS2 Christmas Party 1pm
Thursday 19th December - KS1 Christmas Party 1pm
Friday 20th December - Christmas Carol Service 9.15am (Church)
Friday 20th December - 2.15pm End of Term 2
Monday 6th January - 8.45am Start of Term 3
Thursday 9th January - Fox Class Taster Day at Hardenhuish
Wednesday 29th January - Fox Class Taster Day at Sheldon
Thursday 30th January - Diversity Day
Monday 3rd - Friday 7th February - Children's Mental Health Week
Wednesday 12th February - Parents Evening 3.30pm (Hall)
Thursday 13th February - Parents Evening 3.30pm (Hall)
Thursday 13th February - Rabbit Family Learning Afternoon
Thursday 13th February - Hedgehog and Rabbit Cake Bake
Friday 14th February - 3.15pm End of Term 3



Thank you

During the flurry of snow a couple of weeks ago, we had some visitors to our Dormouse outside area. During the summer the Men Shed, Chippenham made some wooden outside play items for the EYFS outside area which included a mud kitchen, sand pit and water stands. The Men Shed came to see the items in situ and were accompanied by representatives from Peak Technologies and Wickes who supplied the wood and other materials. They were thrilled to see the play items in use and were very supportive of the school and helping in the future. A huge thank you to all these organisations.



Cinderella Pantomime

We are all getting excited for the whole school trip to the pantomime in Swindon on **Thursday 12th December**.

Children are required to wear school uniform on the day.

Please remember to provide your child with a packed lunch and drink (screw top preferable). For children in Reception, Key Stage 1 and those in receipt of Free School Meals there is an option on school grid to select a picnic lunch, please could you make sure this is selected by Friday 6th December to give the kitchen time to order in the food. Drinks are not provided so you will need to send your child with a drink.

There is also an option for key stage 2 children to order a packed lunch as well.

We will be eating Lunch when we arrive back from the panto so please make sure that your child has a substantial snack for whilst they are there. Each child at school will have an ice cream/sorbet in the interval too.



Christmas Jumper Day - Tuesday 17th December

We would love to see all of the children in their Christmas or brightly coloured jumpers on Christmas Jumper Day.

If your child does not have a jumper, please do not feel that you need to purchase one; Christmas coloured clothes will be just as lovely.



KS2 Carol Service

Our KS2 children have been working so hard on practising their Christmas carols and are looking forward to performing at **Christ Church, Derry Hill at 9.15am on Friday 20th December**. All parents/carers are welcome.



Christmas Postbox – 2nd to 18th December

The Christmas postbox for children will open on Tuesday 3rd December to Wednesday 18th December.



Christmas services at Christ Church

Sunday 22 December, **Carol Service**, 4.00 pm - enjoy singing some favourite Christmas carols, and hearing traditional and contemporary readings and meditations.

Christmas Eve, **Carols and Crib Service**, 3.00 pm - for those who'd like, you can come dressed up as a character in the Christmas story; we'll build a 'living' Nativity scene, as well as the Crib, while singing more Christmas carols.

Christmas Day, **Family Communion Service**, 11.00 am

Everyone is welcome to join us to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Also

Sunday 5 January, **Christingle Service**, 10.30 am - our regular Family Service will also be our Christingle Service.



FUEL Programme

FUEL is a free holiday activity and food project that offers participants the opportunity to take part in a range of fun activities during school holiday periods in 2024.

The FUEL programme a bespoke provision for school aged children from reception to year 11 who receive benefit related free school meals.

Benefits-related free school meals (FSM) are available to pupils if their parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits, and have a claim verified by their school or local authority.



The FUEL programme is also available to children that meet any of the below:

- Children that are refugees
- Children that are currently in the care system

Children that are referred into the programme by a professional service (e.g.. Local authority, schools, social service)

Participants will be able to enjoy a variety of high quality activities when attending the a FUEL camp, including a range of enriching activities such as festive arts, football, dance, drumming workshops, team games and fun healthy eating workshops. All participants will also receive a nutritious meal on each day they attend the programme.

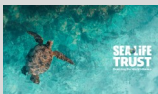
Hedgehog Class in Focus

In Hedgehogs class this term, we have been focused on the sea, travel and pirates. We have explored treasure maps in Geography and done some really good work on giving people directions using our compass points (North, South, East and West). Children have learnt about the Hornpipe and sea shanties in Music, whilst in DT they have made moving pictures featuring pirates. This work culminated in a fun-packed Family Learning afternoon last Thursday where the children had a great time dressing up as pirates and demonstrating their skills to their parents – thank you to all that came!

We have, of course, been working really hard to prepare our lines and songs for our Nativity performance and look forward to sharing this with you next week. We are also starting to make some lovely Christmas decorations in DT!

Squirrel Class Fundraising

Before half term, Squirrel class ran 60 laps of the playground to raise money for the Sea Life Trust. We were learning about creation and how we can help to look after our world.



We are proud to announce that we raised approximately £103 which we have donated to the Sea Life Trust. A huge well done to Squirrel Class for coming up with the idea and becoming courageous advocates and for the parents who generously donated.

Goodbye to Mrs Sandell

We are really sad to be saying goodbye to Mrs Sandell (our Early Years Teaching Assistant) who will be leaving us at the end of this term to spend more time with her family.

We will miss you lots!

Choir

The newly created school choir visited Kingston House Care Home in Derry Hill to entertain the residents with their rendition of some Christmas carols and songs. The children all sung beautifully and staff at the Care Home thanked them all for spreading happiness and joy.



Big Thank you

To all the parents, adults, and children who attended the Christmas bonanza last Friday and purchased an item from Megan's stall, thank you so much for your generosity. We were delighted to open the donation boxes and discover that she had raised £150 (this has been matched to £300).

It has been 14 months since Megan's diagnosis and 9 months since her bone marrow transplant. We are nearing the point where we can resume our normal lives.

It has been an extremely long and difficult journey for our family, especially for Megan, who has endured so much.

However, we could not have managed without the help and support of amazing charities like The Aplastic Anaemia Trust.

If you would like more information about them, please visit their website: <https://www.theaat.org.uk/>

Thank you again from all of us,

Megan, Jack, Matt & Jess

